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Oilmen Pledge Seepage Ban Aid

Progress Cited To Water Board

By ROY CAULEY

Substantial progress toward eliminating brine seepage from wells of South Torrance Oilfield into our underground water supply came out of an informal hearing held in Torrance City Hall Thursday, when a large turnout of oil operators met with Regional Water Pollution Control Board 4 in the council chamber.

About 30 operators stated their wish to join with a cooperative undertaking to carry waste water from the field through a steel brine sewer pipe to the County Sanitation System.

Oil man Mel Killingsworth told the board that most bids have been taken and the pipe will be ready for connection with the wells in about 90 days. Only five out of a total of 85 operators have failed to respond to communications concerning brine seepage.

These five will be requested by registered mail to have a representative at the July meeting of the Water Pollution Board, at which time tentative requirements will be read. After discussion, the requirements, as amended, will be passed upon and a formal hearing called, if all the operators do not cooperate.

These steps will pave the way for possible legal action to obtain full compliance with seepage regulations.

Didn't Reply

The five operators who had so far failed to respond to communications from the board were listed as:

Kern Petroleum Co., LMS Oil Co., Moon Oil Co., George Milligan, and E. A. Shamlin. George Powell, secretary of the Torrance Planning Commission, who has been engaged in discussions for nearly a year on this subject, expressed satisfaction with Thursday's water pollution meeting, especially with the large number of operators present and the small number who haven't cooperated.

Mel Killingsworth of Independent Oil Co., chairman of a committee of oil men to investigate costs of construction of the proposed brine disposal pipe, reported at length on his investigation.

Gives Cost Figure

The pipe construction costs would be about \$18,000, he said. Replying to questions, he estimated that about 90 days time would be required for the pipe to be ready for the operators to connect up with. He said a plan has been drawn up, and Petchel, chairman of a pit made. Bids have been received on about 90 per cent of the cost.

He was speaking of the area bounded by Sepulveda on the north, Crenshaw on the west, Walnut on the east, and 230th St. on the south.

Regarding raising the required \$18,000, he said that the money hasn't been subscribed, but he doesn't foresee any difficulties in that connection. "I believe that the money can be raised after an honest effort, not yet made, has been made. The nose is being tightened, and we have to make that honest effort, and quick."

The City of Torrance, which controls water disposal factors, including the seepage problem, and which under law can make its regulations as strict as it wishes, as long as minimum standards are met, will now start drawing up an industrial disposal ordinance, Powell informed the board at the Thursday meeting.

Ray L. Derby, chairman of the board, presided over the meeting, and much of the discussion was led by Linne Larson, executive officer.

In a progress report at the previous (March 31) meeting, Powell told the board his survey revealed the following figures in 97 discharges studied:

1—15 had made corrections in seepage;
2—5 had eliminated seepages;
3—27 had planned corrective action;
4—33 had corrective action pending construction by Tor-

Man Beaten, Robbed by Two 'Friends'

A Long Beach man was beaten, robbed of \$20, and left in an open field on Deane St., Friday night, after going on a tour of beer halls with two chance acquaintances, he told police.

The victim was Joe Fred Creek, 37, a riveter. Harley Randall, 5104 Deane, telephoned Torrance police when he discovered Creek in the field, being attracted by the man's cries for help.

Creek said that the two acquaintances had promised to drive him to Gardena for a \$2 fee. After an extended trip with several turns one of the pair said, "It's dark enough now, let's get started."

They then beat him up and threw him out of the car minus \$20 that was in his pocket.

At Harbor General Hospital, Creek declined to be admitted for injuries about the face and head.

Hester Places Second

Torrance High School Track Star Dennis Hester finished second to Leonard Havens of Avila Saturday afternoon in the state finals of the 880-yard run in the Coliseum. A packed field of 18 runners slowed the pace as Havens won in 1:57. John Seaman of Reddy was third ahead of the field.

Variance Hearing Set

Torrance Planning Commission will conduct a hearing at 7 p.m., Wednesday, on a request by George Thomas for a variance to sell milk, eggs, butter, bread, etc. at his poultry store at 4135 W. 182nd St.

Play Schedule For Today Told

Four Torrance Parks and playgrounds will be open today for recreational purposes, according to Recreation Director Harry Van Bellem.

Hours at all four areas—Walteria and Seaside Schools and El Retiro and Walteria Parks—will be from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Polling Places For Bond Vote

In the June 7 school bond election, 19,373 persons will be eligible to count their ballots, according to school officials.

Voters will decide whether the Torrance Unified School District will be authorized to spend \$10,000,000 for additions to the city's school system.

Lomita Mailman Shoots Self in Palos Verdes

Worry over financial obligations apparently was the cause of suicide by Joseph David Bechtold, 42, of 2325 24th St., Lomita, who shot himself Thursday morning in Palos Verdes.

The body of Bechtold, clad in his mail carrier uniform, was found Thursday morning slumped beside a tree, by a schoolboy making his way on a path through a wooded section to get to Miralstele School. The San Pedro office postmaster, under whose jurisdiction Bechtold worked as a utility postman, in various areas, said that Bechtold had at one time delivered mail near the wooded section in which he decided to end his life.

Sheriff's deputies on investigating discovered that financial obligations had been crowding in on Bechtold, strengthening the case for suicide as an interpretation of the death.

A note had been left with Mrs. Christobel Bechtold, the man's wife, telling her that he would go to the San Pedro Post Office to get some papers before returning to take her to work.

At the post office he signed a ledger stating "Bechtold sick," and slipped away a revolver used by mail carriers when carrying large amounts of money.

Driving to Palos Verdes, he parked his car on the Miralstele School parking lot, put the key in his pocket, walked about 100 yards, sat by a tree and shot himself through the forehead, as his movements were deduced by detectives. Official version on the cause of death will be made by the coroner's office, where the body was taken.

Mrs. Richhart's Rites Tomorrow

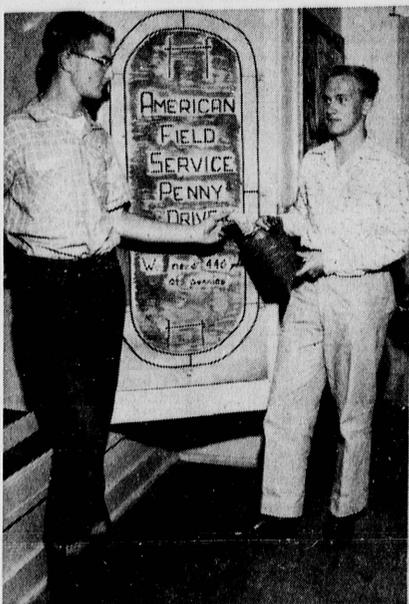
Funeral services will be held tomorrow afternoon for Linnie May Richhart, a resident of Torrance for nearly 40 years. She died Saturday morning.

A native of Ohio, Mrs. Richhart moved to Kansas with her family shortly after her birth and then moved to California in 1902. She and her husband established their home here in 1917. They celebrated their 56th wedding anniversary last January.

Rev. Walter M. Stanton of the United Brethren Church will officiate at funeral services tomorrow afternoon at 2 in the Stone and Myers Chapel. Burial will be in Roosevelt Cemetery.

Surviving are her husband, Harry G. Richhart Sr., of 1424 W. 218th St.; three sons, Harry Jr., of the home address, John, of 1811 Gramercy, and Raymond, of 1728 Manuel; two daughters, Mrs. Margaret H. Wright, 1748 Martina, and Mildred Richhart of the home address. Also surviving are her brother, Charles E. Theobald, of 1629 W. 221st St., and two sisters, Edna M. Halsted of Burlington, Kan., and Della O'Connell of San Diego. Nine grandchildren also survive.

One son, Everett V. Richhart, died in France during World War II.



(Herald Photo)

FOR THE CAUSE . . . Collecting funds for the American Field Service International Scholarships are Jeff Carr, Torrance High School head of the drive, and Max Will, German exchange student at THS this year. The high school students are trying to collect enough pennies to reach their goal of \$157.

Commission to Make Decision On Brick Pits

Final decision on what recommendations are to be made by the planning commission on Torrance's controversial brick pit near 178th St. and Arlington Ave. are to be made Wednesday when the commission meets at 7 p.m. in City Hall.

The commission had recommended approval of H. M. Guenser's request to expand the hole for his brick-making operations.

However, protests came from several quarters, and while the matter was at issue the commission members decided at their last meeting to keep the subject in abeyance pending further study.

Complaints have been leveled at existence of the hole as a danger to children, against filling it, and against filling it as a dump.

North Torrance Civic Assn. said continued operations would depreciate value of surrounding property. Letters of residents opposed continued digging. Because Arlington School is to be built on the adjoining area, the School Board joined in the protest.

SCHOOLS WILL SHORTEN LAST DAY'S ACTIVITIES

The school hours for pupils on June 17, the last day of the school year, have been shortened to enable teachers to complete records that are required before they leave for summer vacation. The hours in all of the buildings in the district will be as follows:

Elementary morning session pupils will report at 8 a.m. and will be dismissed at 9 a.m.

Elementary afternoon and all day session pupils will report at 9 a.m. and will be dismissed at 10 a.m.

High School morning session pupils will report at 7:30 a.m. and will be dismissed at 10:30 a.m.

High School afternoon session pupils will meet at 11:30 a.m. and will be dismissed at 2:30 p.m.

The school transportation facilities will follow a schedule to meet the above hours.

AFSIS Funds Collected by THS Students

Torrance High School students were busy last week, trying to raise \$157 for their share of the American Field Service International Scholarships for next year.

Headed by Jeff Carr, the students were collecting pennies for the drive to bring students here next year, as plans are being made to have one foreign student at Torrance High School and one at North Torrance High School.

THIS student Larry Lippincott will journey to Berlin this summer to go to school as part of the program. During the past year, Max Will, a German boy, and Lena Malmstrom, a Swedish girl, have been students at Torrance High.

Both will be honored at a farewell party this Wednesday evening at 8 p.m. in the YWCA building by the Torrance Chapter of American Field Service. They will leave for their homes on June 25.

Lippincott will leave after school is out for the summer.

South Torrance Shopping Unit Site Purchased

A 160-acre tract in South Torrance has been purchased by Linden Chandler, Lomita businessman, for a "high type" shopping center and residential area. It was announced last week.

The L-shaped property extends three-quarters of a mile along Pacific Coast Hwy. to a point near Dapplegray Lane in Rolling Hills, Chandler said. The highway frontage will be used for a commercial development and shopping center, while the south portion will be developed for residential use.

The property was sold by the Southwestern Portland Cement Co. Chandler operates a large sand and gravel firm at 26301 Narbonne Ave.

The proposed center is directly across the street from the triangle shopping center recently announced at Crenshaw and Pacific Coast Hwy.

Retailers Have Problem

An Editorial

The controversy raised last week over the proposed use of El Prado Park for off-street parking, has fanned some tempers in a manner not likely to encourage harmony within the present organizational fabric of the Torrance Chamber of Commerce. This is unfortunate because the community is at a point where united effort is needed to take full advantage of impending crucial developments.

The situation is serious only because it is symptomatic of underlying differences in objectives between the broader, overall functions of a Chamber of Commerce and the important, but, more specific function of a Retail Merchants organization.

In proposing additional off-street parking facilities, the Retail Merchants Division, through its president Carl C. Duncan, was acting in a most natural manner. Mr. Duncan happened to be the signatory to the letter of request to the City Council. It wasn't his idea; he merely was doing his job as a competent and sincere president of the Retail group. He, nor any member of the committee is not subject to censure for this normal attempt to relieve the parking tension. That should be clearly understood and is by any understanding person.

A point of order was raised at last week's meeting of the Board of Directors of the Chamber when a resolution was passed adopting a policy that will make it necessary for any division or committee to clear any communication of "a public policy nature" through the Board. At the time the Retail Division sent its request to the City Council this policy had not been established by precedent and certainly had not been clearly defined. The Retailers were not, in their thinking at least, bound by any such restriction. Their action, therefore, is understandable.

The situation certainly raises the question of whether the merchants, with their own important problems, will place the actions they must take, to further their own interests, in singular category. The overall function of the Chamber of Commerce is to attract industry to Torrance and to evaluate the needs for development of the whole community. The direct function of a Retail Merchants organization is to promote the commercial welfare of its members, to sponsor community wide sales, to encourage the improvement of the downtown shopping center and to do all within its power to attract new business.

The retailers do need an aggressive, autonomous organization of their own as evidenced by this present situation. Individual retailers should by all means retain memberships in the Chamber of Commerce. But, they owe it to themselves to have a dynamic, aggressive organization that will be their own mouthpiece.

By all means let us achieve harmony. There is too much at stake to tolerate anything less.

Coast Water Purification Strengthened

A resolution passed Thursday by Water Pollution Board 4 is aimed at tightening regulations on water purity along the beaches. The board met at Torrance City Hall.

The resolution, carrying unanimously, provided:

1. Approval of a policy to extend to year-round duration the time for maintenance of a bacteria count at bathing beaches.

2. For requesting the State Department of Public Health, the County Health District, and Los Angeles to furnish their analysis of coast water, to prevent duplication.

3. Arrangements with life guard stations to notify the board immediately and directly of sanitation violations.

Measles Still Leading List

Health reports for the Torrance district for the week ending May 21, showed that measles was still the leading disease.

Of 94 cases of disease reported during the week, 50 were measles. Torrance had 15 cases, while county areas reported 19, Redondo Beach, 7, Gardena and Manhattan Beach, 3, Palos Verdes Estates, 2, and Hermosa Beach, 1.

Other diseases plaguing area residents during the period included mumps, 19; chickenpox, 11; hepatitis, 6; German measles, 5; whooping cough and scarlet fever, each 2; gonorrhea, amebiasis, polio, and tuberculosis, each 1.

The city of Torrance reported seven cases of mumps and one case each of hepatitis, German measles, and amebiasis.

News of Ellinwood...

News of the Ellinwood area of southwest Torrance is now being reported by Janet Robinson and Barbara Weaver, and their first roundup of neighborhood activities appears today on Page 3 of your Torrance HERALD.

Neighborhood and family items from the fast growing area will be reported each Monday by the two HERALD reporters. If you live in this area and are giving a party, having visitors from out of town, or anything else which you think would make an interesting item to pass on to your neighbors, call the reporters in your area at FR 5-7063.